

March 2002

Attendees and Area Announcements listed after minutes.

Review of Past Month

The Institutional Environmental Health Workshop was held in San Diego; The Area OEHE Directors meeting was held in Fort Worth; Portland, Navajo, and Aberdeen Area's held their annual OEHE workshops, California's Workshop was canceled; DCP's COSTEP selections were held.

Ken Secord came on board as Navajo Area DEHS Director, Ralph Fulgham started as full-time Head Start environmental health consultant; Bruce Etchison announced he had accepted a position with the Coast Guard in Alameda.

We lost a colleague, Alex Hardin, Institutional Environmental Officer at the Phoenix Indian Medical Center died.

Injury Prevention Topics

Budget Formulation Meeting Slide Presentation

Areas have scheduled their tribal consultation meetings throughout March. The meetings result in tribally identified health priorities that are very influential in the IHS Budget formulation process. Environmental Health program participation in the Area tribal meetings should be a top priority during the month. Kelly Taylor recently distributed a sample slide presentation that Area's can modify and use at their tribal consultation meetings. The presentation is available at:
http://www.dehs.ihs.gov/documents/budget_form_ip.ppt

Project Officer Training

Project officer training is going on this week in Denver for Injury Prevention Infrastructure Grant project officers.

Institutional EH Topics

"Greening of the Government" Executive Order

Merritt provided an overview of recent activities related to the executive order.

IEH Meeting

The annual Institutional Workshop was held in San Diego February 18-22, 2002. Copies of presentations made at the meeting and meeting minutes will be posted on www.dehs.ihs.gov.

IHS Emergency Preparedness Meeting

IHS management is scheduled at HQE on March 19 to plan outline an emergency preparedness strategy for IHS. We understand the goal of the meeting is to develop a more comprehensive/systematic agency approach to emergency preparedness activities, coordinate IHS emergency response activities and identify programmatic and leadership responsibilities. We expect that Merritt Lake will be assigned the responsibility to coordinate emergency plans.

General Environmental Health Topics

Oak Ridge National Laboratory Visit/GIS Project in WebEHRS

Alan Dellapenna and Darren Buchanan visited the Department of Energy research facility. The visit was made to identify ways to collaborate on GIS issues and identify opportunities for collaboration on environmental health issues.

Oak Ridge has extensive experience, expertise and resources in the use of GIS technology for environmental health, epidemiology, and public health applications. Darren identified Oak Ridge staff to

network with in his efforts to add GIS technology to WebEHRS. He also identified technical specifications, databases and equipment to utilize in the development of GIS capacity for WebEHRS. Based on the visit findings we will purchase a GIS database and Darren will refine his programming approach to incorporating GIS into WebEHRS.

GIS Pilot Projects with Summer COSTEP

COSTEP's in several Areas have been identified to pilot test adding GIS coordinates to facilities in WebEHRS in targeted service units. Staff interested in participating in this pilot test this summer should contact Darren.

COSTEP Update

Last month on the call we discussed the relatively small number of EHO COSTEP applicants in DCP's applicant pool. We have had a good response since the last call in increasing the number of applications. Letters to the academic programs went out and calls were made to professors; the efforts resulted in an increase in applicants. Thank you to all for the great effort.

PHS selection day was held March 4-5. IHS select about 12 COSTEP's prior to the selection day. We have a number of other selections to make. Look for an updated applicant list and selection status report next week.

DEHS Dir. Meeting Update

The minutes to the January meeting are available at:

http://www.dehs.ihs.gov/documents/DEHS_Directors_Mtg_Minutes_Jan-02.pdf

Two topics need follow-up from Area DEHS Directors:

1. Area comments on the proposed changes to the Agency Promotion Recommendation Policy and Score Sheet; and
2. Area comments on the proposed definition changes the Facility Codes. Mike Welch distributed the revised definitions via e-mail in late February.

Please provide your Area's comments to Alan Dellapenna on these the two topics by **March 31**.

Vacancy Table Info

Remember to update your vacancies and see vacancy postings at www.dehs.ihs.gov.

Next Call

April 11, 2002, conference call numbers are the same for each call:

Dial In Number: **1-888-323-7711** (for all calls)

* Pass Code: **90841** (for all calls)

Participants and Area Announcements

Aberdeen: Not on the call.

Albuquerque: Chris Buchanan.

Anchorage: Keith Cook, Celeste Davis. Information on the Anchorage Area EHS staff exchange program was recently distributed. Jeff has received some responses, there is still time for interested staff.

Bemidji: Not on the call.

Billings: Not on the call.

California: Not on the call.

Nashville: Not on the call.

Navajo: Not on the call.

Oklahoma: Not on the call.

Phoenix: Dave McMahon. Phoenix Indian Medical Center has an IEH position coming soon. Hayden Hardie was select for the SUS position in Parker.

Portland: Al Knapp. Thank you to Kelly for attending the Area Workshop, she did a great job.

Tucson: Mark Pike. Toby Hill, SUS Casa Grande transferred to FDA, expect more information on filling on his position soon.

Environmental Health Support Center: Not on the call.

Rockville: Alan Dellapenna, Merritt Lake